

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 6162

TO BE ANSWERED ON WEDNESDAY, THE 04th April, 2018

Hindi as Official Court Language

+6162 SHRI HARISH CHANDRA *ALIAS* HARISH DWIVEDI:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

- (a) Whether Hindi has the status of an official language in the Supreme Court;
- (b) if so, whether hearing of cases in the Supreme Court takes place in Hindi and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (c) if not, whether the Government has any plans to ensure hearing of cases in the Supreme Court in Hindi also; and
- (d) if so, the details of the steps taken in this regard, so far?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF LAW & JUSTICE AND ELECTRONICS & INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGY**

(SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD)

(a) to (d) : Article 348(1) of the Constitution of India provides that all proceedings in the Supreme Court and High Courts shall be in English language until Parliament by law otherwise provides. Parliament has not made any law in this regard. Therefore, English continues to be the language for all proceedings of the Supreme Court. However, the Government, in accordance with the

provisions of Article 348 (2), and in consultation with the Supreme Court, has authorized use of Hindi in the proceedings of four High Courts namely, Patna High Court, Allahabad High Court, Madhya Pradesh High Court and Rajasthan High Court.

The 18th Law Commission of India in its 216th Report on “Non-feasibility of introduction of Hindi as compulsory language in the Supreme Court of India” (2008) has, after detailed discussions with all stake-holders, inter-alia, recommended that at any rate no language should be thrust upon the Judges of the higher judiciary and they should be left free to deliver their judgment in the language they prefer. It is important to remember that every citizen, every court has the right to understand the law laid down finally by the Apex Court and at present one should appreciate that such a language is only English.

In accordance with the decision of the Cabinet Committee dated 21.05.1965, the Chief Justice of India is consulted before obtaining the consent of the President to any proposal relating to introduction of regional languages in the Supreme Court/ High Courts. The Chief Justice of India, had informed on 18.01.2016 that the Full Court, after extensive deliberations, disapproved the proposals relating to introduction of regional languages in the Supreme Court/High Courts and reiterated the Resolution which was adopted on 7th May, 1997, and was reiterated on 15th December, 1999, and on 11th October, 2012.

Therefore, the matter of introduction of regional languages in the Supreme Court and High Courts is left to the judiciary as it is the best judge to decide if the time is ripe to take the step in that direction. Once the Government receives the consent of judiciary in this regard, further action, as appropriate, at the level of the Central Government and State Governments is taken.
